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that last rule of Descartes's method, followed as far as human vision can, "to make enumerations so complete and reviews so general that I might be assured that nothing was omitted."

These fragmentary notes are not written with a destructive intent—as little as they are likely to have any destructive effect. I am by no means sure that on this matter Mr. Singer has not in reserve something indestructible. They are written to elicit, directly or otherwise, the fuller thought which must lurk behind; and to emphasize the cardinal principle which we may one and all devoutly repeat to ourselves as we clutch our reason; the principle laid down by the old lady in "Middlemarch" or "Daniel Deronda": "We must all make a little effort every day to keep sane and use words in the same senses."

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## REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE

*Notes on the Science of Picture Making.* C. J. HOLMES. New York: D. Appleton & Co. 1909. Pp. xxiii + 317.

The diffident title of this book does more credit to the modesty of its author than justice to the significance of its contents. Mr. Holmes is the successor of Ruskin. He holds the Slade professorship in fine arts at Oxford, Ruskin's old chair, but fortunately there is no sign in the book that he holds also Ruskin's outlook and Ruskin's idiosyncrasies. Writing in an unusually lucid, easy style, he approaches his problem with an openness of mind and a sanity of view as extraordinary as significant in the curious anomalies of contemporary criticism of art. Keeping, with professorial naïveté, to one or two inept and even clumsy usages, as where he says "infinity" when he means "suggestiveness," Professor Holmes nevertheless manages to point out with absolute clearness the most obvious, and hence most unnoted, aspects of the rôle played in painting by "design," "material," and "character." His exposition is preceded by a notable introduction, the point of which is to assert the commonplace, and hence to critics and the half-educated, the startling, fact that there is no one, single, indivisible, absolute beauty of objects—estheticians and philosophers to the contrary notwithstanding. "In spite of all the mighty names connected in one way or another with the criticism of the fine arts, we have still no fixed standard for passing judgments on pictures already existing; much less such a system of training the intelligence as will save us from making blunders as to future productions. . . . In esthetics we seem still to be as far from . . . unity as were men of science three centuries ago." The comment is as kindly as it is just, for conceivably worse things might have been said about esthetics—it might have been accused

of irrelevancy, artificiality, and gross stupidity, not merely of discord. One must, of course, bear in mind that Professor Holmes means by "fixed standard for passing judgments on pictures," a technological and professional standard, not a psychologic and evaluative one. The latter, as yielded in the nature of the "esthetic experience," has been correctly defined in its essentials since Plato. The mistake has lain in trying to derive from *it* the nature of its conditions, *i. e.*, the "causes" of constructive art; for the experience is derivable only from the conditions, not the conditions from the experience.

The two fundamental requirements for excellence in painting Professor Holmes holds to be "emotion" and technique. Mere technical power tends to make a picture clever and empty; mere emotion will make no picture whatever. Theories of painting, as against manual skill and vigorous insight, are of secondary importance. They are in any event contingent on the medium used and the subject-matter to be presented. Pictures can not be made according to absolute rules; rules have to be accommodated to pictures. Now the content of these pictures must not be photographic, but "designed," invented, imagined; not, however, irrelevantly, but in terms of nature. Nature is to be used, but not to be imitated. As Whistler wrote in the "Ten O'clock," "To say that nature is to be taken as she is, is to say to the player that he may sit on the piano."

The content of pictures, then, being abstracted from nature for the purpose of portrayal with technical perfection and spiritual fervor, will exhibit in those pictures at least four qualities "which all fine pictures in some degree possess, of which mediocre pictures lack at least one, and of which bad pictures lack at least three." These qualities are unity, vitality, infinity and repose. Their presence depends upon pictorial design, *i. e.*, on emphasis of this or that "value," subject to pictorial conditions determined by "symbol," place, spacing, recession, shadow, color, material. "If unity may be said to give a painting coherent structure, vitality to inspire it with the breath of life, infinity to redeem it from shallowness, repose may be said to endow it with good manners."

This imposing array of terms, contrary to critical usage, really means something, collectively and severally. I am not sure that in the first instance they may not be reduced to two or at most to three, for certainly there can be no repose in a picture without unity or coherence, without an integration and balance of parts, and when a picture has such an integrative repose it has unity. Nor does the difference between vitality and infinity seem altogether irreducible. The "sense of life in a picture," or vitality, is hardly distinguishable from the "element of uncertainty or evanescence in spacing, in tone, in color, or in line," *i. e.*, infinity. For if Professor Holmes means by infinity only delicacy and refinement, and by vitality only vigor, these two qualities can not be present in one coherent pictorial unit at the same time. If, however, "infinity" means just that suggestiveness which is due to the cumulative effect of vigor and vitality which subtlety of rhythm, coloration, etc., yield, the two are identical; "vitality" being only a term for the more obvious aspects of the "infinite" variety. From this point of view, the qualities required in a

picture are unity and vitality, and these are permanent in so far as they are pervasive. Then in the first case they give "repose," in the second "infinity."

The materials to be used in the design which should possess these qualities are denoted by the second set of terms. By "symbol" Professor Holmes means "devices or signs used by the artist to convey his meaning, or to transmute natural phenomena into terms of art"; by plan, "the surface disposition of the lines and masses in a picture"; by spacing, "the proportions masses bear to one another"; by recession, "the apparent nearness or remoteness of the objects contained in a picture." Shadow, color, and material carry their ordinary significance. This classification is rather over-empirical, and is capable of reduction, but it has the technological advantage of considering coincident aspects of a picture separately. The rest of the chapters under the heading "Design" are devoted to showing how each of these elements may best contribute to the four necessary qualities of great painting. Space does not permit a detailed review of this sane and interesting study. One can note here only the rather haphazard treatment of the subject, and the omission of any consideration of the synthetic effect of these pictorial elements. For a picture conceivably painted with especial reference to each element, and resulting in each case in a particular perfection, may yet be a bad picture. A series of excellent details may make an abominable whole, as any observer of modern painting knows.

From the study of design Professor Holmes passes to the study of materials. By materials he means the physical content of the painter's instruments of expression. These are distinguished as processes of drawing, engraving, and painting. Drawing may be done in silverpoint, pen and ink, pencil, chalk, pastel, charcoal, and with the brush. Silverpoint will give delicacy of tone, etc.; pen and ink, spirit and sharpness; pencil and chalk, precision of form and gradation of tone; pastel and charcoal, which are modern favorites, will render excellently shadow, strength, and light; while brush-work, which is in execution a process of painting, and in results has the effect of drawing, renders best of all the quality of swiftness.

Under "Processes of Engraving" are discussed the execution and effects of wood-engraving, engraving on stone and on metal. Of the three the first gives the effect of mezzotint; the second, favored by Whistler, has since been commercialized; the third, according as the engraving is done with a tool or with acid, renders a firm and austere line, the trivial results of "stippling," the rich, extravagant individuality of "drypoint," the reproductive accuracy of "mezzotint," or the subtler effects of "etching" and the flat values of aquatint.

The discussion of the methods of painting is bound considerably to interest both lay and professional readers. Professor Holmes distinguishes them as the "transparent method," the "mixed method," and the "opaque method." By the "transparent method," "pigments are used thinly and depend chiefly or entirely for their effect upon light reflected from a luminous ground. The mixed method depends partly upon light

reflected from the ground, and partly upon light reflected from a solid body of pigment," while "the opaque method depends entirely upon light reflected from the solid body of pigment." The latter method is modern and was introduced by impressionists; the mixed method was universally used from the early part of the sixteenth to the latter part of the seventeenth centuries; the transparent method was employed by the very early Flemish masters, the pre-Raphaelites, and some moderns like Orchardson. The elucidation of these methods is assisted with references to the work of De Chauvannes, Watts, Teniers, Gainsborough, Millais, Rubens, etc., and it is put in such a way as to help the worst Philistine toward the appreciation of painting.

The book concludes with a discussion of "the painter's aims and ideals" and the refutation of "some popular fallacies." Professor Holmes distinguishes four classes of paintings—dramatic, lyrical, narrative, and satirical. The first represents a crisis, the second a mood, the third is descriptive, the fourth ridicules. "In practise the groups are usually fused and blended, so that the great majority of easel pictures are not typical of any one group, but should be described as hybrids." This conclusion is as objectionable as the classification. It is as if a naturalist were to say that an animal which is not all legs, or all head, or all body is to be described as a hybrid. As, according to our author, the painter's ideals are defined by the classes his pictures fall under, the painter's mind must also "be described as hybrid." In point of fact the organic unity into which the contents of a good picture are welded justifies and defines those contents; not they, the unity. It is extraordinary that Professor Holmes should have failed to see this, just as it is extraordinary that he should have failed to see the artificiality of his historic division of "art periods" into savage, despotic, individual, and socialistic. So far as the artist himself is concerned, art remains, as our author insists it must, "individual"—*i. e.*, springing from the vital impulse and technical perfection of the artist himself and directed upon whatever task he may have in hand. This is suggested by the summing-up. "The great painter . . . must be at once an individualist and a servant. An individualist because it is unlikely that there is a tradition in which he can profitably allow his personal talent and character to be submerged . . . a servant, in that he must fulfill certain decorative conditions, settled neither by himself, nor usually by his rulers or patrons, but by the habits and customs of his age."

To this dual purpose art education has, in the just opinion of Professor Holmes, failed to contribute anything. Artists begin their careers by aiming for precision, reach its middle point by aiming for "greater breadth of mass," and at its end lose "freedom of brushwork, and a disregard for all minor details." It is right to base our current system on this "generally recognized course of development," but results have been very poor. Our author now analyzes the career of Raphael, Titian, Turner, Rembrandt, etc., and concludes that artists are born into a tradition which they continue or, if not, which they create and develop to a maturity that is their own and the tradition's. Their crisis is at the middle of life, not at its beginning. The only salvation during the crisis

is continual experimentation. The growing painter will "only in early manhood and middle life imperatively need some time of solitude in which to think out the problems of his profession and it is just then that the pleasures of the world are wont to be most importunate and most acceptable." The future of painting will depend partly on this freedom at middle age, mainly on the decrease in number of purchasable "treasures of the past," on the framing of pictures, on the exercise of rigorous selection on the part of the artist, and on his power to deviate just enough from accepted tradition to be fresh without being foreign. What is fundamentally demanded of him is that he shall not give way to popular prejudice and sacrifice "decoration" to "significance" or *vice versa*. He must be neither a carpet-weaver nor an illustrator; he must be an artist, *i. e.*, he must give his picture a decorative quality "fitting that picture alone, arising naturally out of the particular thoughts and things with which it deals, and incapable of being transferred wholesale and applied to some other subject." And this, pictures can not be by being mere decorations in spots or colored photographs. Neither "values" alone nor mere "finish" determines excellence; it is determined by the right use of these as instruments of high emotion. A good picture is "personal experience emphasized by emotion in terms of decoration."

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*The Harveian Oration on Experimental Psychology and Hypnotism.*

GEORGE H. SAVAGE. London: Henry Frowde. 1909.

Dr. Savage's oration is of interest to American science, not because the address makes a substantial contribution to our knowledge of experimental psychology or of hypnotism, but because it may be regarded as an index of the stage of development of British medicine.

About half of the oration Dr. Savage devotes to a sketch of Harvey's life and times. Seventeenth-century England contributed little intelligence to medical science. The separation of the medical profession from the enervating control of the church had only begun, with the result that human ailments were still given a "spiritual" interpretation, and their cure was still sought in charlatanism, legerdemain, and witchcraft. Harvey, who was regarded as a crack-brained iconoclast because of his independent methods of investigation and his original theories, and who, notwithstanding that fact, displayed unceasing tolerance, was an oasis of exemplary fertility in an arid desert of ignorance and superstition. Despite the lack of sympathy of his contemporaries, which at times amounted to hostility, he concentrated his energies in the service of scientific truth with unwavering industry and unusual singleness of purpose. He had but one aim—to know nature—and but one principle—to believe all those conclusions, and only those, to which his reason led him.

Such open-mindedness Dr. Savage urges his professional brethren to entertain toward experimental psychology and hypnotism. Too prevalent is the feeling in the profession in Great Britain "that experimental psychology is hardly likely to reward those who are devoting their lives to it